

In these circumstances Zola summoned his wife and mother to Bordeaux, and set himself to write letters and prepare reports for Glais-Bizoin, pending another appointment ; for the old democrat, on introducing him to Cldment Laurier, who disposed of most of the civil patronage, had said: " I want a prefecture for this young man, — the first one that may fall vacant." In Glais-Bizoin's estimation Zola's claim to such a post was self-evident; for he had belonged to the staff of " La Tribune," and since the Revo- lution of September 4 all the writers on that journal had become members of the Government, ambassadors, or pre- fects. In Zola's case the first vacancies which occurred were the prefectures of Bayonne and Audi, but both were secured by more eager and active candidates, and all that Laurier could ultimately offer was a sub- prefecture, that of Oastel-Sarrasin, a pleasant little town of seven thousand inhabitants, on the Garonne, not far from Montauban.

This incident in Zola's career has been turned by some of his detractors into an exciting romance which it is un- necessary to recapitulate. The main facts have been given by Alexis, to whose account a few particulars may be added, The war at that time was drawing to an end. Gambetta was anxious to prevent any partisans of the fallen

Empire from  
being returned at the elections for an Assembly,  
which were  
becoming more and more inevitable and  
imminent. There  
was a sub-prefect at Castel-Sarrasin named  
Camille Delthil.

Commune of 1871. As Lord Lyons was not then in Paris,  
that version is  
obviously wrong. The incident, which the ambassador himself  
narrated more  
than once in after years, really occurred at Tours late in  
1870, Cavalie's  
words being: "Dites done, nion vieux, il ne faut pas se  
faire de hile, au  
sujet du patron, Allons plutfit prendre un bon hock !" <sup>6</sup>  
Cayali was a  
notorious bohemian, worthy of Murger; he had been one of  
the leaders of the  
cabal against the Goncourts' play, "Henriette Marechal."